

HEALTH ADVISORY



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

REGION IV PUBLIC HEALTH

Clark, Cowlitz, Skamania, Wahkiakum
counties and Cowlitz Tribe

To: Physicians and other health care providers

Please distribute a copy of this information to each provider in your organization.

Questions regarding this information may be directed to the following Region IV health officers:

Alan Melnick, MD, MPH, CPH

Clark County Public Health, 564.397.8182

Skamania County Community Health, 509.427.3850

Cowlitz County Health & Human Services, 360.414.5599

Wahkiakum County Health & Human Services, 360.795.6207

Steven Krager, MD, MPH

Clark County Public Health, 564.397.8182

Skamania County Community Health, 509.427.3850

Cowlitz County Health & Human Services, 360.414.5599

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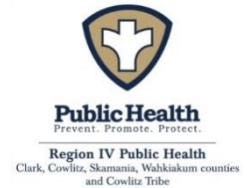
Alert categories:

Health Alert: conveys the highest level of importance; warrants immediate action or attention.

Health Advisory: provides important information for a specific incident or situation; may not require immediate action.

Health Update: provides updated information regarding an incident or situation; no immediate action necessary.

What to know and do about the delta-fueled COVID-19 surge



Summary

[COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations](#) are at the highest levels to-date because of the more contagious delta variant, now dominant across the state. Emergency departments, inpatient services and intensive care units in the region are strained. Vaccine remains an important health intervention despite clear evidence of breakthrough infections. Fully vaccinated individuals still have a lower risk of infection and remain far less likely to have severe disease or require hospitalization compared to unvaccinated.

Providers can help to preserve critical services by using motivational interviewing to recommend COVID-19 vaccines and urge those already vaccinated to talk to friends and family members about the vaccine. Providers can also take steps to help ease demand for care and testing at emergency departments.

Requested actions

Help take pressure off emergency departments:

- Consider extending clinic hours or creating more same-day appointments to ease pressure on urgent cares and EDs for the next 6 weeks.

Actively support ongoing vaccination efforts:

- Make sure you and your clinic staff are fully vaccinated.
- Use every opportunity to vaccinate. Have your staff check the Washington State Immunization Information System (WIIIS) for each patient you see, regardless of the reason for the visit.
- Strongly recommend vaccination including for those with prior infection. Use [motivational interviewing techniques](#) with patients who may be hesitant. Continue to focus efforts on groups with low vaccine uptake like Latinx and Black/African American/African immigrant and refugee.
- Ask patients who are already vaccinated to commit to approaching specific [friends and family members about getting vaccinated](#).
- Offer a third dose of mRNA vaccine to patients meeting criteria for [immunocompromised](#). Be on the lookout for more information about booster doses for all coming soon.

Make testing easily available to patients:

- Continue to offer and encourage SARS-CoV-2 testing (regardless of vaccination status or past infection) to patients who report exposure and/or symptoms during routine visits, scheduling calls and/or during any other points of contact.
- [COVID-19 testing locations](#)

Provide education and direction to patients who are positive or exposed:

- Offer guidance and educate patients about isolation, quarantine and limiting transmission to close contacts.
 - [What to do if you have confirmed or suspected COVID-19](#)
 - [What to do if you were potentially exposed to someone with COVID-19](#)
- [Consider offering subQ monoclonal Ab treatment](#) as part of your practice as it has been shown to reduce the likelihood of hospitalization of high-risk patients with COVID-19 by 70%.
- [Use of Monoclonal Antibody Products to Treat COVID-19 in Washington State](#)

Model good infection control precautions

- Stay home and seek testing, even if you are only mildly ill and even if you are vaccinated.
- Masks are now required indoors statewide. Model appropriate mask use in your professional and social settings.
- Maintain adequate supplies of PPE and use appropriately for all patient care.

Thank you for your partnership.

Local health jurisdiction	Phone	Fax
Clark County Public Health	564.397.8182	564.397.8080
Cowlitz County Health Department	360.414.5599	360.425.7531
Skamania County Community Health	509.427.3850	509.427.0188
Wahkiakum County Health and Human Services	360.795.6207	360.795.6143